

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

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Duxbury's Parade - Keep the Spirit Going!



Town May Fund Fourth --
Selectman says town should
pay for parade.

As Appeared in Duxbury Reporter, Wednesday,
July 13, 1994, written by Rob Keane, MPG Newspapers

Duxbury--This year's Fourth of July parade had over 135 sponsors, but next year, all of Duxbury's taxpayers could be footing the bill.

Selectmen chairman Margaret Kearney hopes to sponsor an article at next year's town meeting that will have the town pay the tab for the 1995 Fourth of July parade.

Kearney's suggestion is hardly new--the town paid for the parade up until 1989, when tough economic times, transformed the parade into one mainly supported by donations.

"When the funding was taken away, we were in very bad economic times," said Kearney. "But we're in better shape now, and I think (the town) can afford it."

Kearney said although the article would put the burden on the taxpayers, it would be fair.

"I think the parade is a town tradition, enjoyed by many of the citizens," she said. "Everyone in Duxbury appreciates it, and looks forward to it every year."

Kearney said she's unsure how much the parade would cost "only pennies per taxpayer."

One taxpayer who would be happy to pay extra in taxes for the parade is Brian Connelly, chairman of the 1993 & 1994 July Fourth planning committees.

"It would be great if the parade was sponsored by the town," he said. "This year, people in the committee spent 80 percent of their time fundraising and 20 percent planning the parade -- it can get boring."

Connelly said the committee's goal for this year's parade was \$10,000, and it was all needed.

"Parades don't just happen," he said. "The bands cost \$1,000 to \$1,200, and we gave out \$1,600 in prizes this year."

Currently, the town does technically support the parade through the police budget. Each year, police details for the parade costs about \$3,000, which selectmen include in the police department's budget.

In Kearney's opinion, the parade committee is busy enough organizing the parade without worrying about how to pay for it.

"The committee has a gigantic task," she said. "They have to organize the parade and find bands to perform. They shouldn't have to also try and fund the parade."

Kearney said she has not discussed the idea with the other selectmen or town manager Rocco Longo.

Selectmen Friend Weiler said he would like to see alternate funding come into the parade, but not necessarily from the town.

"I think going to town meeting to try and get the town to pay for the parade is a last resort," he said. "If there's a groundswell of activity from the community, and they want to pay for (the parade), I'm not going to argue with them, but I'd like to raise the money outside of town meeting."

Weiler proposed putting an optional check-off box on the real estate tax forms for voluntary donations as a possible solution.

Connelly said town support for the parade won't necessarily stop the committee's fundraising. "The more money you have, the better the parade will be," he said.

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